

**Lewes District Council**

**Interim Land Availability Assessment (LAA)**

**February 2022**

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**Note: Appendices, including the Site Assessment Outcomes and Parish Mapping are provided in separate documents available on the [LAA webpage](#).**

# 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Land Availability Assessment (LAA) is an important evidence piece in the preparation of the Local Plan, particularly in establishing the development capacity of the district. Lewes District Council (LDC) is preparing a new Local Plan covering the areas of the district which fall outside the South Downs National Park (SDNP). As the new Local Plan can only allocate sites in the areas outside the SDNP the council's LAA only assesses sites that fall outside the SDNP area within the district.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.2. LDC last published a Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) in September 2018. Whilst the traditional focus of a LAA is housing and employment land potential and supply, the scope of the interim LAA is wider and includes assessment of other land uses to support future development, such as land for renewable energy or green infrastructure, and therefore the SHELAA has been renamed the Land Availability Assessment.
- 1.3. The requirement to undertake a LAA is set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework 2021 \(NPPF\)](#). Further guidance is set out in the [Planning Policy Guidance](#). Paragraph 68 of the NPPF requires that planning authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a land availability assessment.
- 1.4. The Interim LAA is being published to support the preparation of the Local Plan and to help understand gaps before further evidence gathering is undertaken. This report provides a brief introduction to the interim LAA, the policy background, a summary of the interim assessments and the district's theoretical housing capacity based on information available to the council at the time of concluding this interim LAA document.
- 1.5. The full site assessments and sites maps (by Parish area) are published in Appendix 3 and 4, as is the LAA methodology, published in Appendix 2 which itself was subjected to consultation in 2021. These are available on the [LAA Webpage](#).
- 1.6. It is important to make clear that **the interim LAA does not allocate land for development or determine whether a site will be allocated for development. The inclusion of a site within the interim LAA should not be taken to imply that the site will be allocated for housing or looked upon favourably when determining planning applications.** The interim LAA is also not a statement of council policy. The decision to allocate sites will be made through the emerging Local Plan Document which will be subject to further consultation as set out in the Local Development Scheme.

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<sup>1</sup> We will work with the SDNPA on sites which are either on or cross the boundary between the SDNP and district.

- 1.7. A total of 66 new sites, received through the 2020 Call for Sites and, 186 sites, sourced from other supply have been assessed in the interim LAA, including sites bought forward from the previous SHELAA, current planning applications and lapsed planning permissions.
- 1.8. Out of the total 252 only 193 sites were assessed in Stage 3 for housing, 15 are assessed as being deliverable or developable, and 30 sites were considered to be potentially deliverable or developable, 132 sites have been assessed as not deliverable or developable, and 16 sites are assessed as having unknown deliverability. 10 sites were considered for employment land, 2 sites were considered deliverable, 4 potentially deliverable, and 4 not deliverable or developable.
- 1.9. Three sites were submitted for consideration for Solar Farms of up to 50MW. All three of the sites have been considered as potentially suitable for their proposed development as energy generation sites but require further work around understanding potential constraints.
- 1.10. Many sites submitted through the 2020 'Call for Sites' included habitat banks or Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS), or renewable energy generation in association with their own residential proposals. These sites are not assessed in relation to the provision of green infrastructure as it is assumed it would only come forward as part of a larger scheme and only in association or benefit to that proposal. Only one site was submitted for consideration in and of itself for green infrastructure.

## 2. Introduction

- 2.1. The interim LAA provides evidence as to whether, or not, there is an adequate supply of housing land to meet the district's locally assessed housing need. An assessment of land availability is required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in order to "have a clear understanding of the land availability in their area...and identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability" (para 68, revised NPPF 2021). The LAA will therefore be one of several key evidence studies supporting the development of the district's Local Plan policies.
- 2.2. The interim LAA draws on site information currently available to the council and will be reviewed and updated accordingly during the plan-making process. We will continue to work with stakeholders to ensure that the assessments in future iterations of the LAA take account of the most current information available at that time. Consequently, assessments determined in this interim LAA may/are likely to change in a future iteration of the LAA.
- 2.3. The interim LAA's focus is on housing land potential and supply. Sites which are assessed include those submitted through the 'call for sites' exercise or are already known to the council (e.g. brought forward from previous SHELAA). The interim LAA also assesses employment sites and sites with potential for renewable energy production or green infrastructure, such as land for wind or solar energy generation, or sites for Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGs) or habitat banks.
- 2.4. The interim LAA helps the council understand what sites are theoretically available for development across the district. This together with planning permissions already granted,

### Explanatory Note

- 2.5. Where a site is assessed as suitable, it does not imply that planning permission would be granted for development. Neither does the commentary relating to a site within the LAA constitute formal planning advice. Planning applications would need to follow the normal application process and will continue to be considered against the appropriate policies. The assessment of a site within the interim LAA does not preclude it from being considered for other uses.
- 2.6. The interim LAA assessment uses an agreed, objective and consistent methodology which seeks to capture information on sites including information on site constraints as they exist at a particular point in time. The LAA methodology is published separately as appendix 2 to this report on the [LAA webpage](#). Additionally, while the interim LAA provides information on opportunities for residential development, it does not

provide a five-year housing land supply. For details of the housing land supply, please see the published five year housing land supply note<sup>2</sup>

- 2.7. Further iterations of the LAA will form part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan and together with several other evidence base documents will help inform policy formulation, particularly the spatial strategy. Other evidence documents being prepared include, but not limited to, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Strategic Transport Studies, the Landscape Capacity Study, Sustainability Appraisal and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Information from these other studies, where it has been readily available, has also been used to inform the site assessments within the interim LAA.
- 2.8. The site assessments, provided in appendix 3 Site Assessments, include information on known constraints on a site and aim to provide reasoned justifications for the assessment outcomes. The assessments, based on available data and carried out at a point in time, are subject to change as more up to date evidence becomes available during the preparation of the Local Plan.

## **Local context/policy position**

- 2.9. The current local plan for Lewes District (outside of the South Downs National Park) consists of:
  - 2.9.1. Lewes Local Plan Part 1: Joint Core Strategy with the South Downs National Park 2010-2030 (adopted in 2016), which provides the strategic policies that set the overall strategy for the scale and distribution of development, and;
  - 2.9.2. Lewes Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (adopted in 2020), which contains the non-strategic policies that set out more detail for specific types of development.
- 2.10. The housing requirement (or housing target) is set out in Local Plan Part 1 (LPP1). LPP1 covered the whole of Lewes District, including the South Downs National Park (SDNP) area, and set a housing requirement of 345 homes per year. However, as a result of a legal challenge to LPP1 that partially succeeded, the housing requirement as it applied to the part of the district within the SDNP was quashed. As a result, the housing target of 345 homes per year was disaggregated, resulting in a housing requirement for Lewes District outside of the SDNP of 275 homes per year.
- 2.11. The NPPF is clear that local plans should seek to supply sufficient housing to meet local need. Since its introduction through the NPPF in

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/planning-policy/strategic-housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/housing-land-supply/>

2018, local housing need is calculated using a standard method contained within Planning Practice Guidance. The standard method uses a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic under-supply. Under the standard method, the local housing need for the whole of Lewes District (including the SDNP area) at 11th May 2021 is 782 homes per year.

2.12. However, approximately half of the Lewes District area is in the SDNP, which functions as a separate planning authority. Planning Practice Guidance states that where strategic policy-making authorities do not align with local authority boundaries, an alternative approach to identifying local housing need will have to be used, and such authorities may identify a housing need figure using a method determined locally.

2.13. In May 2021, the council published its 'Approach to Local Housing Need for Lewes District outside the SDNP for the purposes of the Five-Year Housing Land Supply' (May 2021). This sets out a locally derived method for calculating local housing need for the district's plan area (i.e. the district area outside the SDNP) based on the total number of dwellings split between those inside and outside the SDNP. This results in a locally derived housing need figure of 602 homes per year for the district, or 12040 dwellings over the plan period 2010-2030.

## **Our approach to the Land Availability Assessment**

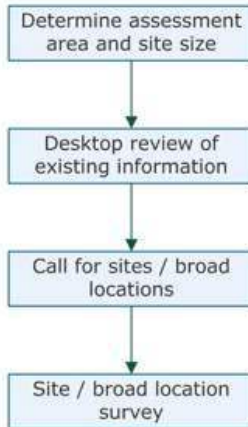
2.14. The methodology available on the council's [LAA website](#)<sup>3</sup> follows the recommended process set out in the PPG. It replicates the five main stages that should be followed to achieve a robust assessment as shown in the flowchart below (Figure 1). The following sections describe how the LAA has been carried out in line with the national methodology as applicable to the Lewes context

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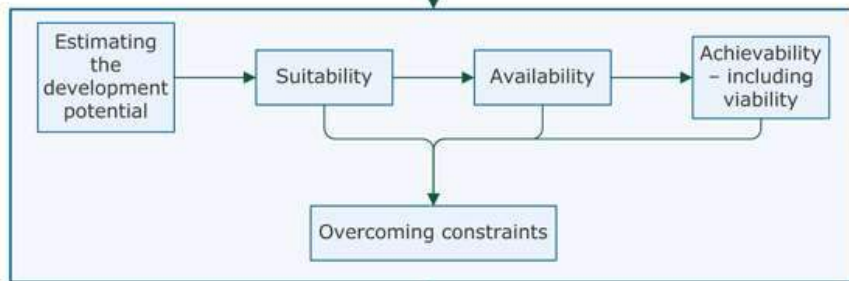
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/planning-policy/strategic-housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/>

Figure 1 – Housing and economic land availability assessment flowchart<sup>[003]4[003]</sup>

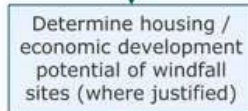
**Stage 1 - Site / broad location identification**



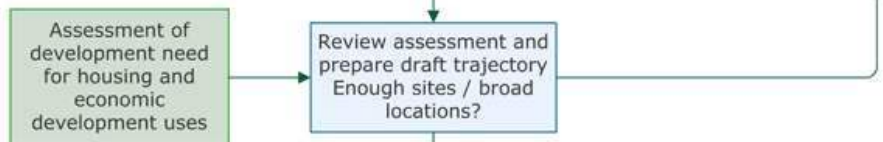
**Stage 2 - Site / broad location assessment**



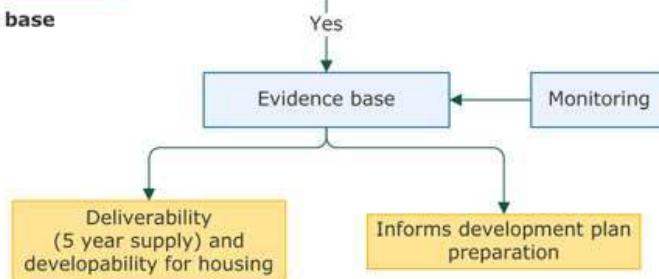
**Stage 3 - Windfall assessment**



**Stage 4 - Assessment review**



**Stage 5 - Final evidence base**



<sup>4</sup> PPG – Housing and economic land availability assessment - Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 3-005-20190722



## **3. Stage 1 – Site and Broad Location Identification**

3.1. Stage 1 of the assessment aims to establish a comprehensive list of sites and broad locations from data sources including through a 'Call for Sites' exercise. National policy or designations mean that it would be inappropriate to carry out more detailed assessments beyond Stage 1 for some sites. The methodology sets out sites that should be excluded from detailed assessments beyond this stage such as sites fully or partially within Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Scheduled Ancient Monuments, National Nature Reserves or those covered by Ancient Woodland.

### **Desktop review**

3.2. Information from a range of sources was gathered and the previous SHELAA (2018), was used as a starting point for the interim LAA. Several sites were deleted, and these are shown in Appendix 5 (with the reasoning). This is due to:

- having no site information,
- being duplicate sites (to avoid double counting),
- having been granted planning permission, or
- being allocated through the previous Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans.

3.3. Sites deleted as they have been granted planning permission will be monitored closely to ensure that if permissions lapse without being implemented, they are reassessed as part of a future LAA. Any historical sites that were within the SDNP have been deleted entirely from the LAA.

3.4. Other sources of information that were reviewed in the search for sites included looking at information on land in local authority ownership (to date no sites with potential for development of 5 dwellings or more have been identified). The Register of Surplus Land contained no sites within the district, and the Brownfield Land Register had no new sites that were not already within the LAA.

3.5. To ensure the assessment is manageable, practicable and strategic, sites assessed as capable of yielding less than 5 dwellings or under 0.25h/500m<sup>2</sup> of economic floorspace are excluded from the Stage 2 Assessments. Excluded sites are referred to as 'filtered' in the LAA.

### **Call for Sites**

3.6. A Call for Sites is a way for landowners, developers, individuals and other interested parties to suggest sites for development, and to let us know when they may be available for development. Government planning practice guidance advises that, 'if the process to identify land is to be

transparent and identify as many potential opportunities as possible, it is important to issue a call for sites and broad locations for development'.<sup>5</sup>

- 3.7. A Call for Sites was carried out between 28<sup>th</sup> September and 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020. It was an opportunity for landowners, site promoters and interested parties to submit land for consideration in the LAA by the council.
- 3.8. In addition to the sites submitted for either residential or economic development 4 sites were submitted for renewable energy development, and/or green infrastructure.

### **Bringing the information together at this stage**

- 3.9. The key outcome of this stage is an aggregated list combining all sites identified. All the sites have been mapped, by Parish area, to provide a visual representation of the sites that have been assessed in the plan area. In total the interim LAA identified 204 sites suitable for assessment (this excludes 48 sites at Stage 1 (see table in Appendix 5)).

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<sup>5</sup> 'Housing and economic land availability assessment - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)) (Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 3-012-20190722, Revision date: 22 07 2019

## **4. Stage 2 – Site/broad location assessment**

- 4.1. The purpose of Stage 2 is to assess the suitability, availability and achievability of sites, to assess a site's capacity and to consider whether a site is economically viable for development. 204 sites have been assessed and the findings of the assessments are summarised in this section.
- 4.2. The Site Assessment Outcomes and Maps of sites by Parish area are provided in appendix 3 and 4 available on the council's LAA webpage.
- 4.3. The methodology, provided in appendix 2, sets out the full criteria for assessing sites at this stage. The first step of this stage was to assess the suitability of the sites. Each site was assessed using the assessment criteria set out in the methodology to address the issues below.
- 4.4. The criteria informing the suitability assessment will include:
  - national policy
  - local policy (the development plan) including relevant 'made' neighbourhood plans
  - appropriateness and likely market attractiveness for the type of development proposed
  - contribution to regeneration priority areas
  - the effect upon landscapes including landscape features, nature and heritage conservation
  - a high-level assessment of accessibility, highways infrastructure and impact on strategic road network
  - flood risk
  - biodiversity and ecological sensitivity
  - contamination
  - a high-level assessment of environmental conditions/amenities of future residents;
  - a high-level assessment of the potential vulnerability of a site to climate change risk over the whole lifetime.
- 4.5. The site assessment is used to form a judgement as to whether a site can be considered 'deliverable' within the next five years, or 'developable' over a longer period. A 'Red', 'Amber' and 'Green' scoring system has been used to show the assessment result of a site in the interim LAA.
- 4.6. As part of the assessments technical advice was sought from East Sussex County Council on matters of highway capacity impacts,

archaeological impacts and landscape impacts. Parish Councils were also given an opportunity to provide information regarding sites within their Parish areas.

## **Site Assessments for residential development**

- 4.7. A total of 193 sites were assessed for potential residential development. With all new sites, information received by the council or known constraints relevant to the sites were fed into the assessment. While we have sought to ensure that double counting does not take place for the sites that are in categories 1 & 2 (see Table 1 below), we have not taken the same approach for sites in categories 3 & 4, since sites in these categories will be reviewed as we progress the Plan through the next stage.
- 4.8. The NPPF at paragraph 73 states that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns. There have been submissions through the 'Call for Sites' for extensions to Ringmer (900 dwellings Ref: 51RG), Cooksbridge (1100 dwellings Ref: 19HY) and a new settlement in the parish of East Chilton (3000 dwellings Ref: 11EC).
- 4.9. Given the complexities of planning for residential development at this scale these submissions are being considered separately outside the interim LAA to enable a simpler overview of the assessment findings for the remaining sites to be provided here. These sites however do appear on the parish maps for information purposes, the deliverability of the sites is unknown currently. For ease these have not been included in the tables of site assessments for this interim LAA.
- 4.10. Of the 193 sites assessed, 15 are assessed as being deliverable or developable, and 30 sites were considered to be potentially deliverable or developable, as shown in Table 1. The 30 sites assessed as potentially deliverable or developable will be reassessed as part of the plan making process. Unknown' sites are generally sites that would be considered suitable but for which there is no information held on their availability or achievability. Owners of these sites will also be contacted as we move forward with the plan.

Table 1: Summary of Site Assessments outcomes (excluding new settlement and extensions)

Sites assessed		Category 1 - Deliverable/ Developable sites		Category 2 - Potentially deliverable or developable		Category 3 - Not Deliverable or Developable		Category 4 - Unknown Availability and Achievability	
Number of sites	Dwelling Yield	Number of sites	Dwelling Yield	Number of sites	Dwelling yield	Number of sites	Dwelling Yield	Number of Sites	Dwelling Yield
<b>193</b>	<b>1064</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1619</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>8057</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>419</b>

Table 2: Summary of site Assessment outcomes by Parish (excluding new settlement extensions)

Parish	Sites assessed		Category 1 Deliverable/Developable sites		Category 2 Potentially deliverable/developable		Category 3 Unknown Availability or Achievability		Category 4 Not Deliverable or Developable	
	Number of sites	Dwelling Yield	Number of sites	Dwelling Yield	Number of sites	Dwelling Yield	Number of sites	Dwelling Yield	Number of sites	Dwelling Yield
<b>Newhaven &amp; South Heighton</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>690</b>
<b>Seaford</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Peacehaven</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1697</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1396</b>
<b>Barcombe</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>Chailey</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>961</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>684</b>
<b>Ditchling</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>297</b>
<b>Hamsey</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>311</b>
<b>Newick</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>653</b>
<b>Plumpton</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>693</b>
<b>Ringmer</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>2197</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1125</b>
<b>Telscombe</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Wivelsfield</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2187</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1853</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>10649</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1619</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>8057</b>

## Employment land

- 4.11. The Employment and Economic Land Assessment (EELA) was last updated in 2012. This identified a modest quantitative need for land for offices (Use Class E, previously Use Class B1a) (particularly in Lewes, outside the plan area), and for industrial uses (Use Class B1c/B2/B8). The EELA also identified that there was a lack of good quality premises for industrial uses.
- 4.12. LPP1 demonstrated there was sufficient land in quantitative terms to meet the employment floorspace requirement within the district to 2031. Therefore, additional sites for employment purposes were not allocated in LPP1. Given the time that has elapsed since the previous EELA was undertaken an updated Economic Needs Assessment to inform the new Local Plan will be needed.
- 4.13. Ten sites considered for the provision of employment space are shown in the separate Site Assessments document. 9 of these 10 sites assessed were submitted through the Call for Sites, 1 site was taken forward from the previous SHELAA. The 10 sites provide a total yield of 24,010m<sup>2</sup> of employment floorspace. Table 3 below provides information on these sites.

Table 3: Employment Land Assessment Outcomes

Sites assessed		Deliverable/Developable sites		Potentially deliverable or developable		Not Deliverable or Developable	
Number of sites	Employment Floorspace Yield	Number of sites	Floorspace Yield	Number of sites	Floorspace yield	Number of sites	Floorspace Yield
<b>10</b>	<b>24010</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3950</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6360</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13,700</b>

## Sites for Renewable Energy and Green Infrastructure

- 4.14. In order to support future development, and to assist with achieving the Council's ambition for carbon neutrality, sites for green infrastructure and/or renewable energy proposals are also included in the interim LAA for assessment
- 4.15. Three sites were submitted for consideration for Solar Farms of up to 50MW. Two of these sites are in the parish of Ringmer (Ref 62RG and 63RG) and one in the parish of Firle (Ref 02FL). All three of the sites have been considered as potentially suitable for their proposed development as energy generation sites but require further work around constraints before a firm conclusion can be drawn.
- 4.16. Many sites submitted through the 2020 'Call for Sites' included habitat banks or Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS), or renewable energy generation in association with their own residential proposals. These sites are not assessed in relation to the provision of

green infrastructure as it is assumed it would only come forward as part of a larger scheme and only in association or benefit to that proposal. Only one site was submitted for consideration in and of itself for green infrastructure.



## 5. Stage 3 – Windfall Assessment

- 5.1. The NPPF defines ‘Windfall’ sites as sites not specifically identified in the development plan. Paragraph 71 of the NPPF states “that where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of the anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply [and] any allowance should be realistic having regard to the historic windfall delivery rates...”.
- 5.2. The role of windfall is to provide an allowance for sites which contribute to future housing supply through an analysis of past trends. Using past trends and extrapolating/projecting these forward means that there is evidence and certainty that this source of supply will continue forward over the plan period.
- 5.3. In order to determine the potential supply of housing through windfall sites over the plan period, completions over the last ten monitoring years have been analysed<sup>6</sup>. In accordance with national guidance, a size threshold of 5 or more dwellings has been applied, and therefore sites delivering below this threshold have not been assessed. Table 7 below shows the windfall supply of residential development over the past 10 years from all types of small sites.
- 5.4. Table 4 shows that an average of 42 (18%) dwellings have been completed through windfall/small sites over the last 10 years. This demonstrates that historically small site completions have provided a consistent source of windfall supply, and this is projected to continue over the plan period.

Table 4: Total small sites over previous 10-year period

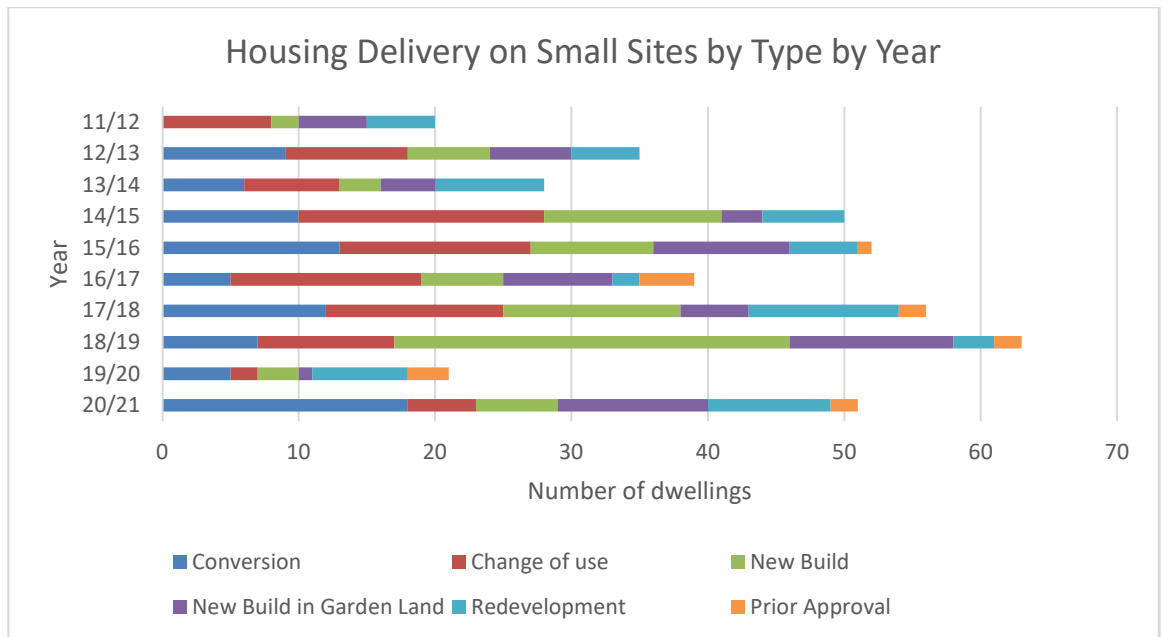
YEAR	Total Housing Delivery (net)	Total Housing Delivery on Small Sites (net)	Delivery on Small Sites as % of Total Delivery (net)
20/21	272	51	19%
19/20	242	21	9%
18/19	281	63	22%
17/18	316	56	18%
16/17	167	39	23%
15/16	214	52	24%
14/15	252	50	20%
13/14	90	28	31%
12/13	224	35	16%
11/12	205	20	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2263</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>18%</b>

<sup>6</sup> Completions are Lewes District outside of the SDNP

- 5.5. There will be occasions when large (5 or more dwellings) unidentified sites - such as a consequence of land ownership changing, land becoming redundant or being released- come forward which the council had not identified previously. Such sites are not considered in the windfall allowance given their size and cannot be considered a reliable source of supply even though they are contributing to the district's housing delivery.
- 5.6. Paragraph 71 of the NPPF states that 'plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens.' Policy DM30 of LPP2 sets out that development in rear domestic gardens will be permitted where certain criteria are met, such as the development would not have an overbearing impact on existing homes and would not result in the loss of features that make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the locality. Therefore, inappropriate backland development would be against national and local policy.
- 5.7. Small sites, delivered over the last 10 years, have been broken down into specific development types to show the contribution to housing delivery that these types of development have made.
- Conversion – Subdivision of a larger unit into smaller units
  - Change of Use – Change of use class to or from residential (not including under prior approval)
  - Prior Approval – including change of use under any prior approval (including office to residential and agricultural barn conversions)
  - Redevelopment – Demolition of a site and provision of new build residential units
  - New Build – Construction of residential development on vacant land which does not involve demolition (excluding those in garden land);
  - New Build in Garden Land – Construction of a residential development on land previously forming a residential garden.
- 5.8. The following chart shows the dwellings delivered on small sites over the last 10 years broken down by type of development<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Data is provided in Appendix 7



5.9. Typically, opportunities for change of use, conversions and comprehensive redevelopments are difficult to identify in advance as they require the landowner to identify their intention to develop. However, these are shown above to be a reliable source of housing delivery.

5.10. Historically new build development on garden land has been excluded from the windfall allowance calculations. The 2015 version of the NPPF defined Windfall Sites as *'sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.'* The definition of Windfall was amended in the 2018 NPPF to *'Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.'* Therefore, this windfall assessment has included all small sites, including greenfield land and those sites within residential gardens and the above chart shows these are providing a reliable source of delivery.

## Windfall Calculation

5.11. Table 4 shows that small scale windfalls have historically contributed towards housing land supply within the district. There are currently 146 dwellings committed on small sites, of which 25 dwellings are with outstanding prior approval.

5.12. Delivery on small sites, over the past 10 years, has been an annual average of 42 dwellings. Based on this past trend, a windfall allowance of 42 dwellings per year is a realistic annual rate to include for the plan period. This would provide a total allowance of 672 unit, over the remaining 16 years of the plan period.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> No allowance is made for the next 3 years of the plan period to avoid double counting with existing commitments.

## 6. Stage 4 – Assessment Review

- 6.1. Stage 4 of the methodology recommended in the National Planning Practice Guidance involves comparing the identified development needs of the area with the sites identified as available, suitable and deliverable in stage 3.
- 6.2. Table 5 below sets out the summary findings from the interim LAA assessment. The table shows an indicative capacity of the plan area of 7028 dwellings over the plan period.

Table 5: Housing Assessment totals- excluding New Settlement and Extension sites

-	<b>Number of sites</b>	<b>Yield</b>
Dwellings delivered 2020-2021	-	272
Sites with planning permission to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021 (provided in Appendix 6)	164	1960
Sites with strategic or Neighbourhood Plan Allocation (provided in Appendix 6)	49	1532
Deliverable and Developable LAA Sites	15	554
Potentially Deliverable or Development LAA Sites	46	2038
Windfall Allowance	-	672
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>7028</b>

- 6.3. However, for reasons mentioned earlier, it is important to note that this is an interim stage indicative figure and further evidence gathering and analysis as part of the plan making process will need to be undertaken. This will include an updated Local Housing Needs Assessment and an Economic Development Needs Assessment identifying up to date housing and employment requirements. Additionally, work to understand the contribution from the 3 ‘large’ sites is yet to commence and has not fed into this interim LAA. As such it would be premature for the council to announce that it cannot meet its housing need within its plan area.
- 6.4. In accordance with paragraph 025 of the PPG<sup>9</sup> in the first instance the interim assessments will be revisited, including density assumptions to ensure the efficient use of land as well as any contribution from the three larger sites not assessed in this interim LAA, should they be assessed as suitable. A further ‘Call for Sites’ will need to be undertaken following publication of this interim LAA to ascertain if any other sites are available.
- 6.5. If following a further ‘Call for Sites’ and evidence gathering an insufficient supply of sites to meet housing need is identified, then it will be necessary for the council to consider how else it may meet the shortfall. If there is

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<sup>9</sup> PPG – Housing and economic land availability assessment - Paragraph: 025 Reference ID: 3-025-20190722

clear evidence that strategic policies cannot meet the needs of the area, factoring in the constraints, it will be important to establish how needs might be met in adjoining areas through the process of preparing statements of common ground, and in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate.

## **7. Stage 5 – Final Evidence Base**

7.1. Stage five of the land availability assessment methodology set out in the planning practice guidance is the production of the final evidence base report including outcome. It includes the core outputs defined in the NPPG, namely:

- A list of excluded sites with clearly evidenced and justified reasons
- A list of all sites or broad locations considered, cross-referenced to their locations on maps
- An assessment of each site or broad location, in terms of its suitability for development, availability and achievability (including whether the site/broad location is viable) to determine whether a site is realistically expected to be developed and when
- An assessment of the potential type and quantity of development that could be delivered on each site/broad location, including a reasonable estimate of build out rates, setting out how any barriers to delivery could be overcome and when
- An indicative trajectory of anticipated development and consideration of associated risks.

7.2. Because this is an interim stage LAA, and for the reasons set out earlier in this section, we are not identifying an indicative housing trajectory. Instead, the assessments provided in the interim LAA should be viewed as the starting point for the council's journey on preparing its Local Plan. Recognising that the LAA will undergo further iterations, the housing trajectory will be made available as part of a future LAA.

## **8. Next steps**

8.1. The Local Development Scheme contains the timetable that the council has set itself to prepare its Local Plan. As stated earlier in this report, this will include gathering evidence to support the Local Plan's development.

8.2. The LAA will be a key piece of evidence which the council will use to shape its spatial strategy and this interim LAA represents the first step in understanding the district's development capacity. Its findings are being shared to help inform future assessments of existing and potential sites. Over the coming months the council will be revisiting the interim LAA assessments and is inviting submission of additional or updated information to inform its work.

8.3. Submissions, including submission of new sites, should be made to the Planning Policy Team via email: [ldf@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@lewes.gov.uk)

## **9. APPENDICES**

The report is supported by appendices, which are available as separate documents on the [LAA Website](#)

1. Site submission proforma
2. Methodology
3. Full site assessments outcomes
4. Maps of assessed sites
5. Excluded/deleted sites list
6. List of sites with planning permission, and existing allocations without planning permission
7. Windfall calculations